

LITTLE TRAVERSE BAY BANDS OF ODAWA INDIANS
7500 ODAWA CIRCLE, HARBOR SPRINGS, MI 49740

TRIBAL COUNCIL TRAVEL REPORT NARRATIVE

From: Kevin A. Gasco

Date: April 1, 2012

2013 Anishinaabemowin Teg Language Conference
Kewadin Casino, Sault Ste. Marie, MI

I attended the 2013 Anishinaabemowin Teg Language Conference in Sault Ste. Marie on March 28 through March 31, 2013. I arrived late on March 28th after getting back from the NIGA Trade Show and Convention. I registered on the morning of March 29th. I was happy that the Title VII program at Harbor Springs High School made it possible for my daughters Margaret and Anna to attend the conference.

I attended two workshops on the first half day of the conference. The first one I attended was put on by Nipissing University from North Bay, Ontario, Canada. The panel was moderated by a Language Program Instructor. The panel consisted of students that are currently in the teacher training program and centered on the different media they use to teach their classes. The core of the program is 6 week intensive summer programs for 3 years. After each summer session, the student receives a certificate from the Ontario Education Ministry that allows them to student teach various grade levels. After the 3rd year, they become certified language instructors. The second one I attended was put on by language students from the University of Michigan. The presentation centered on the cumulative work that is done by first year students at the U of M language classes in helping to build the database of online language resources at the U of M. I went because the moderator of the panel of students was Margaret Noori, a language teacher that I wanted to talk to about our language programs. I had also wanted to ask Margaret Noori about the Nipissing University Language Teacher Training Program to see if Michigan or any state had anything similar yet. There is nothing currently but Margaret did say that if they language instructors in Michigan sat down they could come up with a similar program that could be marketed to the Michigan School Board or an institution of higher learning which could begin to work on a language instructor program. The online resource developed by the U of M Language program is www.ojibwe.net and has been having content added for 6 years.

In addition, I was able to talk with Helen Roy at great length. Helen Roy was the original MC at Language Powwows I attended when I was a singer with Treetown Singers from Ann Arbor, MI. I wanted to talk with Helen about language immersion and how we can intensify our efforts to develop speakers which would revitalize our language and not just preserve it. She had an interesting idea she'd like to try to promote. She currently teaches language at Michigan State University and wanted to establish a "language house". The idea is for a number of Tribal governments to put money together to buy a house close to campus in East Lansing and staff it with fluent speakers. Each tribe would be able to scholarship a set number of students at the house. The house would be total immersion and after completing language studies the student would go back to their tribe to teach language. I attended a workshop that Helen Roy was giving as well to learn more about her new approach to teaching language. She says that the difficulty most language programs are having these days is that we think in English and rely on memorization too much. She says the key to producing language speakers is to teach them to think in "Indian" and not have to think about each word. Her system breaks each word into one of the set number of letter combinations and vowels. Once you know and can picture what each sound represents the easier it will be to think in "Indian" or picture what action is being described. I purchased her new language book for \$120.00 to begin learning her method. I would like to have her come to LTBB to give some presentations to promote her new method. She says immersion is good but we will only produce good listeners.

While at the conference I was able to spend time talking with LTBB Education Director Janaan Cotto, former Chairman Frank Ettawageshick, and current Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board Member Debra Ann Pine.

I attended the Awards Banquet where the entertainer was Hoop Dancer Daphne Odjig. I also presented one award named in honor of my cousin Victor Kishego. I also attended the cultural sharing evening with my two daughters.

I was grateful for the opportunity to attend the language conference and feel it was beneficial when it comes to what will help us here at LTBB revitalize our Anishinaabemowin.

Miitgwetch,

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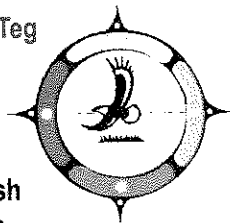
James Wood-Salomon

19th Annual Anishinaabemowin-Teg
Language Conference

BANQUET

\$35 Duet Roast Beef & Whitefish
Friday, March 29, 2013 at 6pm

Only 600 Tickets Sold!
Banquet includes Scholarship Awards



Ticket

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